



MAXIMIZING DISASTER ASSISTANCE GRANTS TIPS FOR K-12 SCHOOLS FROM THE CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (CAL EMA)

Cal EMA is the state agency responsible for the administration and coordination of state and federal disaster assistance programs, including Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs for state and local agencies and certain private nonprofit organizations that provide an essential governmental type service.

In accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), requests for state and federal assistance come up from local agencies through the Operational Area (OA) to the Cal EMA Region and Recovery Division.

When a local emergency is proclaimed by a city and/or county requesting state and/or federal disaster assistance, the Initial Damage Estimates (IDE) prepared by the impacted jurisdictions are collected by the OA (County) and provided to Cal EMA as the first step in determining if a state and/or federal disaster declaration is warranted. Damage estimates for schools is a significant component of this process.

During the response and initial recovery phase, the affected school district(s) should be in close communication with the County Office of Emergency Services (representation at the County Emergency Operation Center is recommended).

For post-disaster facility safety inspections contact the OA or Cal EMA Region to request evaluators through the Safety Assessment Program (SAP), establish agreements pre-disaster with county or city building departments, or contract with engineering firms. Submit findings to the OA for inclusion in the IDE. (Note: SAP certified engineers from the Department of State Architects can also be requested through the OA and/or Cal EMA Region).

- Accuracy in reporting is essential in maximizing state and federal disaster assistance funding.
- Track all associated costs for response and recovery activities for the event separately. A code to delineate costs specific to the event is recommended.
- Document damage with photographs, written damage descriptions, and dates.
- Document work and costs by project to keep them separate.

Before the next event, adopt a procedure that allows for non-competitive bids or sole source contracting when there is an emergency requirement that will not permit delay. A list of preapproved contractors acquired through a competitive bid process is recommended.



An informal method for securing services or supplies that do not cost more than \$100,000 by obtaining several price quotes from different sources is acceptable. If bids are solicited by phone, log all calls and discussions to document the reasonableness of the costs.

Time and materials contracts should be avoided, but may be allowed for work that is necessary immediately after the disaster has occurred when a clear scope of work cannot be developed. A cost ceiling or "not to exceed" provision must be included in the contract along with a damage description and scope of work.

Costs plus a percentage of cost contracts are not eligible.

Temporary relocation and/or portable classrooms may be eligible for reimbursement while permanent repairs are underway.

Cost effective hazard mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the threat of future similar damage to a facility damaged during the disaster can be included as part of the total eligible cost of repair, restoration, or reconstruction of a facility. The measures must apply to the damaged elements of the facility and are limited to measures of permanent work.

Upgrades required to meet applicable codes and standards are not "mitigation measures." These measures are part of eligible restoration work if they were formally adopted and implemented prior to the disaster declaration and uniformly applied to the work being performed to similar facilities throughout the jurisdiction.

To further educate the districts, FEMA publications FEMA 321 and 322 are available online at www.FEMA.gov. Additional information can be found on the Cal EMA webpage under Recovery at www.calema.ca.gov.

FEDERAL HAZARD MITIGATION GRANTS

Funding for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is up to 20 percent of the total disaster assistance provided under the federal Stafford Act for a Major Disaster. This is a statewide competitive grant administered by Cal EMA.

For a school district to be eligible for HMGP funding, it must have a FEMA approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grants are available annually to fund hazard mitigation projects. These grants are based upon nation-wide competition.

PDM funding can be used to develop a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
For more information visit the Cal EMA Hazard Mitigation Web Portal at:
<http://hazardmitigation.calema.ca.gov/>